

# **MLM82S**

MIC & LINE MIXER

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### IMPORTANT SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Read these instructions.
- 2. Keep these instructions.
- 3. Heed all warnings.
- 4. Follow all instructions.
- 5. Do not use this apparatus near water.
- 6. Clean only with a dry cloth.
- 7. Do not block any ventilation openings. Install in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- 8. Do not install near any heat sources such as radiators, registers, stoves, or other apparatus (including amplifiers) that produce heat.
- 9. Do not defeat the safety purpose of the polarized or grounding-type plug. A polarized plug has two blades with one wider than the other. A grounding-type plug has two blades and a third grounding prong. The wide blade or third prong is provided for your safety. If the provided plug does not fit into your outlet, consult an electrician for replacement of the obsolete outlet.
- 10. Protect the power cord and plug from being walked on or pinched particularly at plugs, convenience receptacles, and the point where it exits from the apparatus.
- 11. Only use attachments and accessories specified by Rane.
- 12. Use only with the cart, stand, tripod, bracket, or table specified by the manufacturer, or sold with the apparatus. When a cart is used, use caution when moving the cart/apparatus combination to avoid injury from tip-over.
- 13. Unplug this apparatus during lightning storms or when unused for long periods of time.
- 14. Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel. Servicing is required when the apparatus has been damaged in any way, such as power supply cord or plug is damaged, liquid has been spilled or objects have fallen into the apparatus, the apparatus has been exposed to rain or moisture, does not operate normally, or has been dropped.
- 15. The plug on the power cord is the AC mains disconnect device and must remain readily operable. To completely disconnect this apparatus from the AC mains, disconnect the power supply cord plug from the AC receptacle.
- 16. This apparatus shall be connected to a mains socket outlet with a protective earthing connection.
- 17. When permanently connected, an all-pole mains switch with a contact separation of at least 3 mm in each pole shall be incorporated in the electrical installation of the building.
- 18. If rackmounting, provide adequate ventilation. Equipment may be located above or below this apparatus, but some equipment (like large power amplifiers) may cause an unacceptable amount of hum or may generate too much heat and degrade the performance of this apparatus.
- 19. This apparatus may be installed in an industry standard equipment rack. Use screws through all mounting holes to provide the best support.

WARNING: To reduce the risk of fire or electric shock, do not expose this apparatus to rain or moisture. Apparatus shall not be exposed to dripping or splashing and no objects filled with liquids, such as vases, shall be placed on the apparatus.

### **WARNING**



To reduce the risk of electrical shock, do not open the unit. No user serviceable parts inside. Refer servicing to qualified service personnel. The symbols shown below are internationally accepted symbols that warn of potential hazards with electrical products.



This symbol indicates that a dangerous voltage constituting a risk of electric shock is present within this unit.



This symbol indicates that there are important operating and maintenance instructions in the literature accompanying this unit.

WARNING: This product may contain chemicals known to the State of California to cause cancer, or birth defects or other reproductive harm.

NOTE: This equipment has been tested and found to comply with the limits for a Class B digital device, pursuant to part 15 of the FCC Rules. These limits are designed to provide reasonable protection against harmful interference in a residential installation. This equipment generates, uses and can radiate radio frequency energy and, if not installed and used in accordance with the instructions, may cause harmful interference to radio communications. However, there is no guarantee that interference will not occur in a particular installation. If this equipment does cause harmful interference to radio or television reception, which can be determined by turning the equipment off and on, the user is encouraged to try to correct the interference by one or more of the following measures:

- Reorient or relocate the receiving antenna.
- Increase the separation between the equipment and receiver.
- · Connect the equipment into an outlet on a circuit different from that to which the receiver is connected.
- Consult the dealer or an experienced radio/TV technician for help.

CAUTION: Changes or modifications not expressly approved by Rane Corporation could void the user's authority to operate the equipment.

CAN ICES-3 (B)/NMB-3(B)





### INSTRUCTIONS DE SÉCURITÉ

- 1. Lisez ces instructions.
- 2. Gardez précieusement ces instructions.
- 3. Respectez les avertissements.
- 4. Suivez toutes les instructions.
- 5. Ne pas utiliser près d'une source d'eau.
- 6. Ne nettoyer qu'avec un chiffon doux.
- 7. N'obstruer aucune évacuation d'air. Effectuez l'installation en suivant les instructions du fabricant.
- 8. Ne pas disposer près d'une source de chaleur, c-à-d tout appareil produisant de la chaleur sans exception.
- 9. Ne pas modifier le cordon d'alimentation. Un cordon polarisé possède 2 lames, l'une plus large que l'autre. Un cordon avec tresse de masse possède 2 lames plus une 3è pour la terre. La lame large ou la tresse de masse assurent votre sécurité. Si le cordon fourni ne correspond pas à votre prise, contactez votre électricien.
- 10. Faites en sorte que le cordon ne soit pas piétiné, ni au niveau du fil, ni au niveau de ses broches, ni au niveau des connecteurs de vos appareils.
- 11. N'utilisez que des accessoires recommandés par Rane.
- 12. N'utilisez que les éléments de transport, stands, pieds ou tables spécifiés par le fabricant ou vendu avec l'appareil. Quand vous utilisez une valise de transport, prenez soin de vous déplacer avec cet équipement avec prudence afin d'éviter tout risque de blessure.
- 13. Débranchez cet appareil pendant un orage ou si vous ne l'utilisez pas pendant un certain temps.
- 14. Adressez-vous à du personnel qualifié pour tout service après vente. Celui-ci est nécessaire dans n'importe quel cas où l'appareil est abimé : si le cordon ou les fiches sont endommagés, si du liquide a été renversé ou si des objets sont tombés sur l'appareil, si celui-ci a été exposé à la pluie ou l'humidité, s'il ne fonctionne pas correctement ou est tombé.
- 15. La fiche du cordon d'alimentation sert à brancher le courant alternatif AC et doit absolument rester accessible. Pour déconnecter totalement l'appareil du secteur, débranchez le câble d'alimentation de la prise secteur.
- 16. Cet appareil doit être branché à une prise terre avec protection.
- 17. Quand il est branché de manière permanente, un disjoncteur tripolaire normalisé doit être incorporé dans l'installation électrique de l'immeuble.
- 18. En cas de montage en rack, laissez un espace suffisant pour la ventilation. Vous pouvez disposer d'autres appareils au-dessus ou en-dessous de celuici, mais certains (tels que de gros amplificateurs) peuvent provoquer un buzz ou générer trop de chaleur au risque d'endommager votre appareil et dégrader ses performances.
- 19. Cet appareil peut-être installé dans une baie standard ou un chassis normalisé pour un montage en rack. Visser chaque trou de chaque oreille de rack pour une meilleure fixation et sécurité.

**ATTENTION**: afin d'éviter tout risque de feu ou de choc électrique, gardez cet appareil éloigné de toute source d'humidité et d'éclaboussures quelles qu'elles soient. L'appareil doit également être éloigné de tout objet possédant du liquide (boisson en bouteilles, vases,...).

### **ATTENTION**



Afin d'éviter tout risque de choc électrique, ne pas ouvrir l'appareil. Aucune pièce ne peut être changée par l'utilisateur. Contactez un SAV qualifié pour toute intervention. Les symboles ci-dessous sont reconnus internationalement comme prévenant tout risque électrique.



Ce symbole indique que cette unité utilise un voltage élevé constituant un risque de choc électrique.



Ce symbole indique la présence d'instructions d'utilisation et de maintenance importantes dans le document fourni.

REMARQUE: Cet équipement a été testé et approuvé conforme aux limites pour un appareil numérique de classe B, conformément au chapitre 15 des règles de la FCC. Ces limites sont établis pour fournir une protection raisonnable contre tout risque d'interférences et peuvent provoquer une énergie de radiofréquence s'il n'est pas installé et utilisé conformément aux instructions, peut également provoquer des interférences aux niveaux des équipements de communication. Cependant, il n'existe aucune garantie que de telles interférences ne se produiront pas dans une installation particulière. Si cet équipement provoque des interférences en réception radio ou télévision, ceci peut être detecté en mettant l'équipement sous/hors tension, l'utilisateur est encouragé à essayer de corriger cette interférence par une ou plusieurs des mesures suivantes:

- Réorienter ou déplacer l'antenne de réception.
- Augmenter la distance entre l'équipement et le récepteur.
- · Connecter l'équipement à une sortie sur un circuit différent de celui sur lequel le récepteur est branché.
- Consulter un revendeur ou un technicien radio / TV expérimenté.

**ATTENTION**: Les changements ou modifications non expressément approuvés par Rane Corporation peuvent annuler l'autorité de l'utilisateur à manipuler cet équipement et rendre ainsi nulles toutes les conditions de garantie.

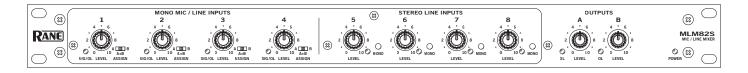
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Cartons et papier à recycler.







### **QUICK START**

This section is provided as a convenience for those in a rush. If you are experienced with this unit or other Rane products, these few words will refresh your memory.

**INPUTS 1** through 4 may be microphone or line level. The choice between the two is made by setting the **LINE** push buttons on the REAR of the unit next to the **MIC/LINE INPUT JACKS**. Each microphone input may be assigned to **A**, **B** or **A+B** outputs using the front panel **ASSIGN** switches.

**INPUTS 5** through **8** are stereo line inputs which may be set to mono using the recessed **MONO** switches located on the front panel.

Internal switches allow setting output signal levels for **MIC** or **LINE**. The factory default setting is **LINE**. If the MLM82S is connected directly to a power amplifier, equalizer or recorder input, choose **LINE** level. If the MLM82S is connected to a microphone jack of an existing sound system, choose **MIC** level.

Once Inputs, Outputs, and power are properly connected, with the **OUTPUT LEVELS** counterclockwise (*off*), set the Input **LEVELS** as high as possible without causing the **SIG/OL** indicators to blink red except during extreme signal peaks. Now slowly raise the **OUTPUT LEVELS** as desired.

### **MLM82S CONNECTION**

When connecting the MLM82S to other components in your system for the first time, leave the power cord for last. This gives you a chance to make mistakes and correct them without damage to your fragile speakers, ears and nerves.

### **MIC/LINE INPUTS 1-4**

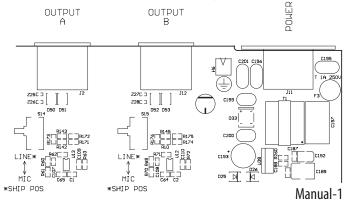
The four XLR jacks provided on the MLM82S are balanced MIC/LINE inputs. They will also accept unbalanced connectors. Use only shielded cable for inputs. For best noise rejection use two-conductor-plus-shielded wire, even for unbalanced operation. Connect the shield at both ends to help insure proper grounding. See the Sound System Interconnection RaneNote included with this manual for all cable adaptations. Rane follows the AES recommended practice of pin 2 positive, pin 3 negative, and pin 1 to shield. Switch any input connected to a microphone to the MIC position (out) using the associated switches on the rear panel. When connecting line level signals, switch the input to the LINE position (in). A single phantom power switch is provided for the four MIC inputs. If LINE is selected, Phantom Power is disabled for that input.

### **STEREO LINE INPUTS 5-8**

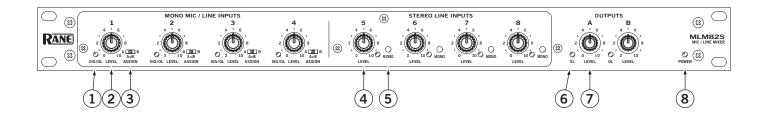
The ¼" connectors are line-level balanced/unbalanced Inputs. If the MLM82S is to be used with unbalanced sources, consult the Sound System Interconnection RaneNote included with this manual for proper wiring. Stereo Inputs use both A and B jacks at each INPUT. INPUTS 5 through 8 also serve as mono Inputs when the front panel MONO switch is engaged.

### **OUTPUTS**

The MLM82S's OUTPUTS are balanced. The same wiring conventions as the XLR Inputs apply. The type of device following the MLM82S must be considered when setting the **internal** Output Level switch. Choose between LINE (0 dB) or MIC (-40 dB) output, the factory setting is LINE. If the MLM82S is connected directly to a power amplifier input, choose LINE level. If the MLM82S is connected to a microphone jack on an existing sound system, choose MIC level. For unbalanced OUTPUT connections *do not* tie pin 3 (i.e. "—") to ground.

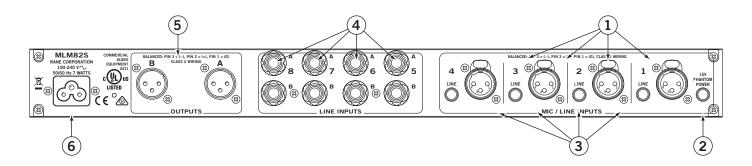


### FRONT PANEL DESCRIPTION



- ① **SIGnal present/OverLoad LED.** This bi-color LED lights green for a -30 dBu signal, and turns red when the Input is within 3 dB of clipping.
- ② MONO MIC/LINE INPUT LEVEL controls 1-4 determine the MIC/LINE preamp gain and mix level to be assigned to the A, A+B, B Outputs.
- 3 ASSIGN switches determine between the A, A+B or B Outputs for each MIC/LINE input.
- (4) STEREO LINE INPUT LEVEL controls 5-8 determine the amount of stereo or mono line Input routed to the Outputs.
- (5) MONO switch mixes the A and B sides of each STEREO LINE input together. When active, the associated LED lights, and the A and B Inputs for that channel have exactly the same level.
- **(6) OUTPUT OverLoad LED** illuminates within 3 dB of an approaching overload condition. To avoid this, the associated OUT-PUT LEVEL control may be decreased, or the problem-causing individual Input Level may be lowered.
- ② A and B OUTPUT LEVEL controls set the Output Level for A and B outputs.
- (8) **POWER LED** is lit whenever adequate power is applied to the unit.

### **REAR PANEL DESCRIPTION**



- ① MIC/LINE INPUTS 1 through 4. These XLRs connect either balanced Microphone or Line signals, depending on the LINE switch setting (see ③). Rane adheres to the international and U.S. standard for balanced pin configurations: Pin 1 is chassis ground (neutral), pin 2 is positive (+), and pin 3 is negative (-).
- ② PHANTOM POWER switch applies 15 V Phantom Power to any Inputs 1-4 that are set for MIC Input.
- (3) **LINE Input selectors** switch the sensitivity and input impedance for either a microphone or line level input. If LINE is chosen, Phantom Power is deactivated for that Input.
- 4" LINE INPUTS. These stereo pairs of balanced inputs accommodate stereo line-level signals. These TRS (Tip-Ring-Sleeve) 1/4" jacks handle either balanced or unbalanced signals. In most cases an unbalanced signal may use a mono 1/4" plug (Tip-Sleeve). See the Sound System Interconnection RaneNote included with this manual for proper connection.
- (5) A and B OUTPUT jacks. These balanced XLR's provide the A and B mixed output. INTERNAL OUTPUT LEVEL switches allow setting the output level for MIC or LINE level. Pin connections are the same as above in (1).
- **(6) Power connector:** The internal universal switching power supply operates on any AC mains 100 to 240 VAC, 50 or 60 Hz (most places in the world). All that is required when traveling is the appropriate IEC line cord.

### **OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS**

### **MONO MICROPHONE/LINE LEVEL INPUTS 1-4**

The microphone preamps in the MLM82S have a combination gain trim and Level control. The LEVEL control adjusts both the input dynamic range and mix level. There is no need for the typical independent gain trim control found on most mixers. The PHANTOM POWER switch activates 15 volt Phantom Power for all Inputs selected for microphone use. With LINE selected, Phantom Power is defeated only in that Input. 15 volts is sufficient power for all but the most esoteric condenser microphones. If in doubt, check the manufacturer's microphone specs.

### SIGNAL PRESENT/OVERLOAD INDICATORS

The MLM82S has four bi-color indicators for Signal Present/ Overload (green/red). Green indication occurs when there is a signal present above -30 dBu. This lamp should be glowing green when signal is present. If this lamp is *off*, check these possibilities:

- A. The Input may not be connected.
- B. There is little or no signal present at the moment.
- C. There is a Mic connected to a channel switched to LINE.
- D. The Mic needs Phantom Power (See Rear Panel, 2).
- E. The LEVEL control needs to be increased (clockwise).
- F. The cable is not wired properly (See the Sound System Interconnection RaneNote).

A red glowing LED indicates that the levels are so high that distortion due to clipping is occurring or imminent.

Check these conditions:

- A. The LEVEL control may be turned too high.
- B. The Output of the preceding device may need to be reduced.
- C. The Input may be switched to MIC with a line-level source. Switch the Input to LINE.

STEREO LINE INPUTS 5 through 8 do not have overload indicators. Because 12 dB of gain is added after the STEREO LINE INPUT LEVEL controls, it is possible to overload a line input without an overload indication. The A and B OUTPUT OL indicators can overload from the Line Inputs if the OUTPUT LEVEL controls are set to 10. Although a single Input may be at unity gain, multiple active Inputs mixed together can cause an overload. If the OL indicators illuminate, just turn down the OUTPUT LEVELS until the overload stops—mix ratios will not change.

### **STEREO LINE LEVEL INPUTS 5-8**

The STEREO LINE INPUT LEVEL controls adjust both A and B Inputs equally. Use the OUTPUT LEVEL controls together for overall output adjustment, or separately to control balance.

A single mono input may be used for the A and/or B inputs. Any mono source connected to A will go to the A output. Any mono source connected to the B input will go to the B output. If you wish one or two mono sources to go to both A and B outputs, press the MONO switch. If you wish to mono a single stereo source and have it present in A and B outputs, press the mono switch. STEREO LINE INPUTS 5-8 may each be independently set for mono operation.

### **HOLE PLUGS**

To protect the setting of any rotary control, remove the knob by simply pulling it off, and snap in one of the hole plugs included with your unit.





### **General Description**

The Rane MLM82S features four balanced, studio grade, Mono Mic/Line Inputs with XLR jacks and 15 VDC phantom power. *Each of the four Mic/Line Inputs may be assigned to A, A+B or B Outputs.* Independent Level/Gain Trim controls and Signal/ Overload indicators are provided for each Mic/Line Input. The Phantom Power switch and the Mic/Line switches are located on the rear panel. Phantom power is removed from any Input set for Line operation.

The MLM82S also features four stereo line level inputs with 12 dB of line gain. Each Stereo Line Input features a recessed Mono switch with indicator and Level control. These Inputs may also be used with four Mono A Inputs and four Mono B Inputs. You get the picture... this mixer is very versatile.

A and B Output Level controls set the master mix level independently for A and B Outputs. The mix amplifiers feature independent overload indicators. To correct any overload condition, the entire mix can be reduced and/or individual Input Levels adjusted. A and B mix Outputs each have an internal switch for padding the output signal to Mic level. The factory default is Line level.

### **Applications**

With features like Mic/Line A / A+B / B Assign switches, independent Stereo Line Input Mono switches and additional line gain, the MLM82S is now one of the most versatile mixers in its class. It is ideal for installations requiring ease of use, compact size, low cost, high performance and security. Applications include, but are not limited too, hotels, churches, conference rooms, schools and rental sound systems. The studio-grade specifications of the MLM82S allow many other applications such as sub-mixing, recording and post-production.

The Mic/Line Assign switches and *independent* Mono switches for each of the Stereo Line Inputs make the MLM82S a true, dual zone capable mixer, i.e., the Outputs may be thought of as two independent zones or a single stereo zone.

### **Features**

- Four balanced Mic/Line Inputs (XLR) with...
  - · 15V Phantom Power
  - Bi-Color Signal Present/Overload indicators
  - Trimless Mic Stage Preamplifiers
  - A / A+B / B Assign Switch
- Four Balanced Stereo Line Inputs (TRS) with...
  - Independent Mono switch
  - 12 dB of Line Gain

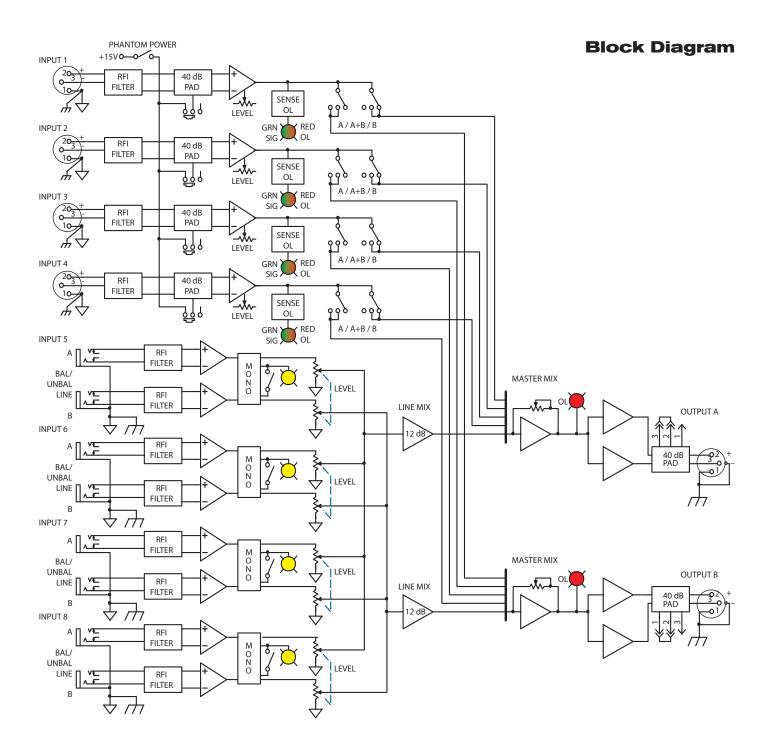
- Two balanced Outputs (XLR) with...
  - Independent Overload indicators
  - · Independent Level controls
  - · Internal Pad for Mic level output
- Individual Level Control Hole Plugs Included
- Internal Universal Power Supply (100-240 VAC)



## **Features and Specifications**

Parameter	Specification	Limit	Units	Conditions/Comments
Inputs: Type	Active Balanced			
Mic Connectors	XLR			pin 2 = (+)
Stereo Line Connectors	1/4" TRS			tip=(+), ring=(-), sleeve=GND
Mic / Line Input Impedance	1k / 96k	1%	Ω	Balanced 500+500 / 48k + 48k
Mic Gain Range	off to +60	±1.5	dB	
Line Gain Range	off to +20	±1.5	dB	
Equivalent Input Noise	-128	typ	dBu	20 kHz bandwidth, 150 $\Omega$ termination
THD & Noise	0.02	max	%	Gain=40 dB, +4 dBu @ 1 kHz, 80 Hz BW
Frequency Response	30 Hz - 35 kHz	-3	dB	
Maximum Input	11.9	typ	dBu	Minimum Gain (3 Vrms)
@ Mic Level	38.6	typ	dBu	Maximum Gain (9.1 mVrms)
Stereo Line Input Impedance	20k	min	Ω	
Gain Range	off to +12	±1	dB	
Signal-To-Noise Ratio	90	typ	dB	Unity gain, output @ +4 dBu, 22 kHz BW
Frequency Response	10 Hz - 35 kHz	-3	dB	
THD & Noise	0.007	max	%	+4 dBu at 1 kHz, 80 kHz BW
Outputs: Type	Active Balanced			
Connectors	XLR			
Impedance	200/100	1%	Ω	Line level Out/Mic level Out
Gain Range	Off to +6	±2	dB	
Drive Level	+24		dBu	600 Ω load balanced
Phantom Power	+15	4%	VDC	
Output Cable Length	1500	typ	feet	Line-level, <50 pF per foot
Crosstalk	-75 @ 1 kHz	max	dB	re +4 dBu any channel to any channel
Power Supply Requirement	100 to 240	10%	VAC	50/60 Hz, 7W
Unit: Conformity	CE, FCC, cULus			
Unit: Construction	All Steel			
Size	1.75"H x 19"W x 5.3"D (1U)			(4.4 cm x 48.3 cm x 13.3 cm)
Weight	4 lb			(3 kg)
Shipping: Size	4.25" x 20.3" x 13.75"			(11 cm x 52 cm x 35 cm)
Weight	8 lb			(5 kg)
Note: 0 dBu=0.775 Vrms				







### Rear Panel



### **Architectural Specifications**

The mixer shall have four studio-grade mono mic/line inputs each with XLR input jack, 15 V phantom power, line pad, A / A+B / B mix assign switch, level control and signal/overload indicator. A single switch shall make phantom power available to all four microphone inputs. Phantom power shall be removed automatically from any mic/line input set for line input. For ease of use, mic/line preamplifiers shall use a single control for input gain trim and mix level.

The mixer shall feature four stereo line inputs each with ¼" TRS input jack, level control and pre-level control mono switch. The inputs shall provide for dual mono operation with four mono signals available for the A mix and four mono inputs available for the B mix.

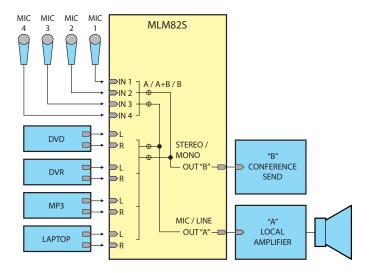
A and B mix outputs shall feature overload indicators, independent A/B level controls, internally selected 40 dB pad for microphone level output and XLR output jacks.

Security features shall include placement of the phantom power and line switches on the rear panel, recessed assign switches, internally located pad switch for selecting line or microphone output level and recessed stereo line input mono switches with position indicators. In addition, each of the front panel level control knobs may be removed and replaced with a security plug. Four security plugs shall be provided for this purpose.

The unit shall be capable of operation by means of its own built-in universal power supply operating at 100-240 VAC and meet CE requirements. The unit shall be UL and cUL listed. The unit shall be constructed entirely from cold-rolled steel, and mount into a standard EIA relay rack occupying 1 rack-space.

The unit shall be a Rane MLM82S Mic & Line Mixer.

### **Application Diagram**







### Sound System Interconnection

- Cause & prevention of ground loops
- Interfacing balanced & unbalanced
- Proper pin connections and wiring
- · Chassis ground vs. signal ground
- Ground lift switches

### **Rane Technical Staff**

### **RaneNote 110**

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### **Introduction**

This note, originally written in 1985, continues to be one of our most useful references. It's popularity stems from the continual and perpetual difficulty of hooking up audio equipment without suffering through all sorts of bizarre noises, hums, buzzes, whistles, etc.— not to mention the extreme financial, physical and psychological price. As technology progresses it is inevitable that electronic equipment and its wiring should be subject to constant improvement. Many things *have* improved in the audio industry since 1985, but unfortunately wiring isn't one of them. However, finally the Audio Engineering Society (AES) has issued a standards document for interconnection of pro audio equipment. It is AES48, titled "AES48-2005: AES standard on interconnections — Grounding and EMC practices — Shields of connectors in audio equipment containing active circuitry."

Rane's policy is to accommodate rather than dictate. However, this document contains suggestions for external wiring changes that should ideally only be implemented by trained technical personnel. Safety regulations require that all original grounding means provided from the factory be left intact for safe operation. No guarantee of responsibility for incidental or consequential damages can be provided. (In other words, don't modify cables, or try your own version of grounding unless you really understand exactly what type of output and input you have to connect.)

### **Ground Loops**

Almost all cases of noise can be traced directly to ground loops, grounding or lack thereof. It is important to understand the mechanism that causes grounding noise in order to effectively eliminate it. Each component of a sound system produces its own ground internally. This ground is usually called the audio signal ground. Connecting devices together with the interconnecting cables can tie the signal grounds of the two units together in one place through the conductors in the cable. Ground loops occur when the grounds of the two units are also tied together in another place: via the third wire in the line cord, by tying the metal chassis together through the rack rails, etc. These situations create a circuit through which current may flow in a closed "loop" from one unit's ground out to a second unit and back to the first. It is not simply the presence of this current that creates the hum—it is when this current flows through a unit's audio signal ground that creates the hum. In fact, even without a ground loop, a little noise current always flows through every interconnecting cable (i.e., it is impossible to eliminate these currents entirely). The mere presence of this ground loop current is no cause for alarm if your system uses properly implemented and completely balanced interconnects, which are excellent at rejecting ground loop and other noise currents. Balanced interconnect was developed to be immune to these noise currents, which can never be entirely eliminated. What makes a ground loop current annoying is when the audio signal is affected. Unfortunately, many manufacturers of balanced audio equipment design the internal grounding system improperly, thus creating balanced equipment that is not immune to the cabling's noise currents. This is one reason for the bad reputation sometimes given to balanced interconnect.

A second reason for balanced interconnect's bad reputation comes from those who think connecting unbalanced equipment into "superior" balanced equipment should improve things. Sorry. Balanced interconnect is not compat-

ible with unbalanced. The small physical nature and short cable runs of completely unbalanced systems (home audio) also contain these ground loop noise currents. However, the currents in unbalanced systems never get large enough to affect the audio to the point where it is a nuisance. Mixing balanced and unbalanced equipment, however, is an entirely different story, since balanced and unbalanced interconnect are truly *not compatible*. The rest of this note shows several recommended implementations for all of these interconnection schemes.

The potential or voltage which pushes these noise currents through the circuit is developed between the independent grounds of the two or more units in the system. The impedance of this circuit is low, and even though the voltage is low, the current is high, thanks to Mr. Ohm, without whose help we wouldn't have these problems. It would take a very high resolution ohm meter to measure the impedance of the steel chassis or the rack rails. We're talking thousandths of an ohm. So trying to measure this stuff won't necessarily help you. We just thought we'd warn you.

### The Absolute Best Right Way To Do It

The method specified by AES48 is to use balanced lines and tie the cable shield to the metal chassis (right where it enters the chassis) at both ends of the cable.

A balanced line requires three separate conductors, two of which are signal (+ and –) and one shield (see Figure 1a). The shield serves to guard the sensitive audio lines from interference. Only by using balanced line interconnects can you *guarantee* (yes, *guarantee*) hum-free results. Always use twisted pair cable. Chassis tying the shield at each end also *guarantees* the best possible protection from RFI [radio frequency interference] and other noises [neon signs, lighting dimmers].

Neil Muncy<sup>1</sup>, an electroacoustic consultant and seasoned veteran of years of successful system design, chairs the AES

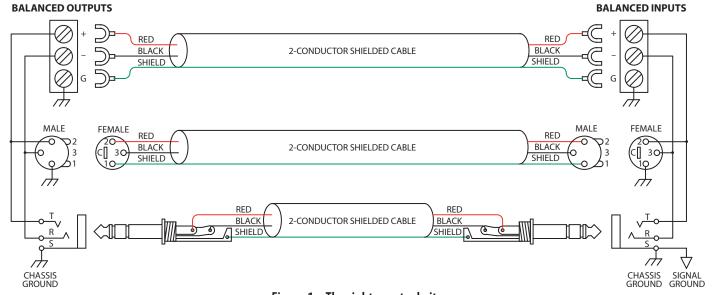


Figure 1a. The right way to do it.

Standards Committee (SC-05-05) working on this subject. He tirelessly tours the world giving seminars and dispensing information on how to successfully hook-up pro audio equipment<sup>2</sup>. He makes the simple point that it is absurd that you cannot go out and buy pro audio equipment from several different manufacturers, buy standard off-the-shelf cable assemblies, come home, hook it all up and have it work hum and noise free. *Plug and play*. Sadly, almost never is this the case, despite the science and rules of noise-free interconnect known and documented for over *60 years* (see References for complete information).

It all boils down to using balanced lines, only balanced lines, and nothing but balanced lines. This is why they were developed. Further, that you *tie the shield to the chassis, at the point it enters the chassis, and at both ends of the cable* (more on 'both ends' later).

Since standard XLR cables come with their shields tied to pin 1 at each end (the shells are not tied, nor need be), this means equipment using 3-pin, XLR-type connectors *must tie pin 1 to the chassis* (usually called chassis ground) — not the audio signal ground as is most common.

Not using *signal ground* is the most radical departure from common pro-audio practice. Not that there is any argument about its validity. There isn't. **This is the right way to do it**. So why doesn't audio equipment come wired this way? Well, some does, and since 1993, more of it does. That's when Rane started manufacturing some of its products with balanced inputs and outputs tying pin 1 to chassis. So why doesn't everyone do it this way? Because life is messy, some things are hard to change, and there will always be equipment in use that was made before proper grounding practices were in effect.

Unbalanced equipment is another problem: it is everwhere, easily available and inexpensive. All those RCA and ¼" TS connectors found on consumer equipment; effect-loops and insert-points on consoles; signal processing boxes; semi-pro digital and analog tape recorders; computer cards; mixing consoles; et cetera.

The next several pages give tips on how to successfully address hooking up unbalanced equipment. Unbalanced equipment when "blindly" connected with fully balanced units starts a pattern of hum and undesirable operation, requiring extra measures to correct the situation.

# COMMON (WRONG) PRACTICE (+) CASE (POTIONAL (CHASSIS SIGNAL CROUND GROUND G

Figure 1b. Recommmended practice.

### The Next Best Right Way To Do It

The quickest, quietest and most foolproof method to connect balanced and unbalanced is to **transformer isolate all unbalanced connections**. See Figure 2.

Many manufacturers provide several tools for this task, including Rane. Consult your audio dealer to explore the options available.

The goal of these adaptors is to allow the use of *standard cables*. With these transformer isolation boxes, modification of cable assemblies is unnecessary. Virtually any two pieces of audio equipment can be successfully interfaced without risk of unwanted hum and noise.

Another way to create the necessary isolation is to use a *direct box*. Originally named for its use to convert the high impedance, high level output of an electric guitar to the low impedance, low level input of a recording console, it allowed the player to plug "directly" into the console. Now this term is commonly used to describe any box used to convert unbalanced lines to balanced lines.

### The Last Best Right Way To Do It

If transformer isolation is not an option, special cable assemblies are a last resort. The key here is to prevent the shield currents from flowing into a unit whose grounding scheme creates ground loops (hum) in the audio path (i.e., most audio equipment).

It is true that connecting both ends of the shield is theoretically the best way to interconnect equipment –though this assumes the interconnected equipment is internally grounded properly. Since most equipment is *not* internally grounded properly, connecting both ends of the shield is not often practiced, since doing so usually creates noisy interconnections.

A common solution to these noisy hum and buzz problems involves disconnecting one end of the shield, even though one can not buy off-the-shelf cables with the shield disconnected at one end. The best end to disconnect is the receiving end. If one end of the shield is disconnected, the noisy hum current stops flowing and away goes the hum — but only at low frequencies. A ground-sending-end-only shield connection minimizes the possibility of high frequency (radio) interference since it prevents the shield from acting as an antenna to the next input. Many reduce this potential RF interference by providing an RF path through

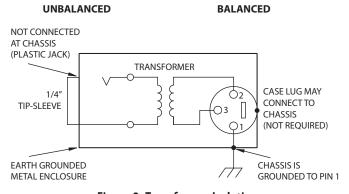


Figure 2. Transformer Isolation

a small capacitor (0.1 or 0.01 microfarad ceramic disc) connected from the lifted end of the shield to the chassis. (This is referred to as the "hybrid shield termination" where the sending end is bonded to the chassis and the receiving end is capacitively coupled. See Neutrik's EMC-XLR for example.) The fact that many modern day installers still follow this one-end-only rule with consistent success indicates this and other acceptable solutions to RF issues exist, though the increasing use of digital and wireless technology greatly increases the possibility of future RF problems.

If you've truly isolated your hum problem to a specific unit, chances are, even though the documentation indicates proper chassis grounded shields, the suspect unit is not internally grounded properly. Here is where special test cable assemblies, shown in Figure 3, really come in handy. These assemblies allow you to connect the shield to chassis ground at the point of entry, or to pin 1, or to lift one end of the shield. The task becomes more difficult when the unit you've isolated has multiple inputs and outputs. On a suspect unit with multiple cables, try various configurations on each connection to find out if special cable assemblies are needed at more than one point.

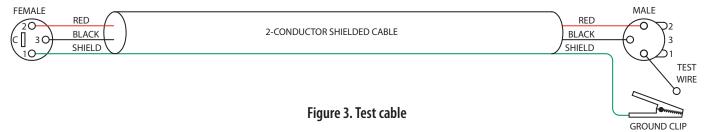
See Figure 4 for suggested cable assemblies for your particular interconnection needs. Find the appropriate output configuration (down the left side) and then match this with the correct input configuration (across the top of the page.) Then refer to the following pages for a recommended wiring diagram.

### **Ground Lifts**

Many units come equipped with ground lift switches. In only a few cases can it be shown that a ground lift switch improves ground related noise. (Has a ground lift switch ever *really* worked for you?) In reality, the presence of a ground lift switch greatly reduces a unit's ability to be "properly" grounded and therefore immune to ground loop hums and buzzes. Ground lifts are simply another Band-Aid to try in case of grounding problems. It is true that an entire system of properly grounded equipment, without ground lift switches, is guaranteed (yes *guaranteed*) to be hum free. The problem is most equipment is *not* (both internally and externally, AC system wise) grounded properly.

Most units with ground lifts are shipped so the unit is "grounded" — meaning the chassis is connected to audio signal ground. (This should be the best and is the "safest" position for a ground lift switch.) If after hooking up your system it exhibits excessive hum or buzzing, there is an incompatibility somewhere in the system's grounding configuration. In addition to these special cable assemblies that may help, here are some more things to try:

- 1. Try combinations of lifting grounds on units supplied with lift switches (or links). It is wise to do this with the power off!
- 2. If you have an entirely balanced system, verify all chassis are tied to a good earth ground, for safety's sake and hum protection. Completely unbalanced systems never earth ground anything (except cable TV, often a ground loop source). If you have a mixed balanced and unbalanced system, do yourself a favor and use isolation transformers or, if you can't do that, try the special cable assemblies described here and expect it to take many hours to get things quiet. May the Force be with you.
- 3. Balanced units with outboard power supplies (wall warts or "bumps" in the line cord) do *not* ground the chassis through the line cord. Make sure such units are solidly grounded by tying the chassis to an earth ground using a star washer for a reliable contact. (Rane always provides this chassis point as an external screw with a toothed washer.) Any device with a 3-prong AC plug, such as an amplifier, may serve as an earth ground point. Rack rails may or may not serve this purpose depending on screw locations and paint jobs.



### Floating, Pseudo, and Quasi-Balancing

During inspection, you may run across a ¼" output called floating unbalanced, sometimes also called psuedo-balanced or quasi-balanced. In this configuration, the sleeve of the output stage is not connected inside the unit and the ring is connected (usually through a small resistor) to the audio signal ground. This allows the tip and ring to "appear" as an equal impedance, not-quite balanced output stage, even though the output circuitry is unbalanced.

Floating unbalanced often works to drive either a balanced or unbalanced input, depending if a TS or TRS standard cable is plugged into it. When it hums, a special cable is required. See drawings #11 and #12, and do not make the cross-coupled modification of tying the ring and sleeve together.

### **Winning the Wiring Wars**

- Use balanced connections whenever possible, with the shield bonded to the metal chassis at both ends.
- Transformer isolate all unbalanced connections from balanced connections.
- Use special cable assemblies when unbalanced lines cannot be transformer isolated.
- Any unbalanced cable must be kept under 10 feet
   (3 m) in length. Lengths longer than this will amplify all
   the nasty side effects of unbalanced circuitry's ground
   loops.

### **Summary**

If you are unable to do things correctly (i.e. use fully balanced wiring with shields tied to the *chassis* at both ends, or transformer isolate all unbalanced signals from balanced signals) then there is no guarantee that a hum-free interconnect can be achieved, nor is there a definite scheme that will assure noise-free operation in all configurations.

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- 2. Grounding, Shielding, and Interconnections in Analog & Digital Signal Processing Systems: Understanding the Basics; Workshops designed and presented by Neil Muncy and Cal Perkins, at the 97th AES Convention of Audio Engineering Society in San Francisco, CA, Nov. 1994.
- 3. The entire June 1995 AES Journal, Vol. 43, No. 6, available \$6 members, \$11 nonmembers from the Audio Engineering Society, 60 E. 42nd St., New York, NY, 10165-2520.
- 4. Phillip Giddings, *Audio System Design and Installation* (SAMS, Indiana, 1990).
- Ralph Morrison, Noise and Other Interfering Signals (Wiley, New York, 1992).
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- 8. Macatee, *RaneNote*: "Grounding and Shielding Audio Devices," Rane Corporation, 1994.
- 9. Philip Giddings, "Grounding and Shielding for Sound and Video," *S&VC*, Sept. 20th, 1995.
- 10. AES48-2005: AES standard on interconnections Grounding and EMC practices Shields of connectors in audio equipment containing active circuitry (Audio Engineering Society, New York, 2005).

Band-Aid is a registered trademark of Johnson & Johnson

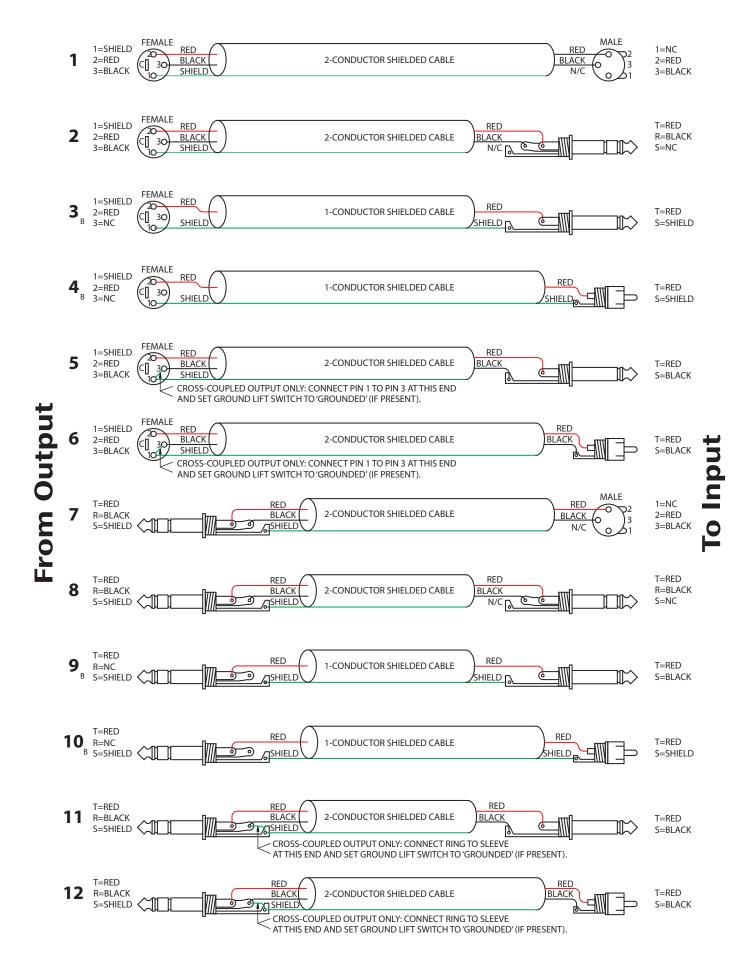
**To Input** 

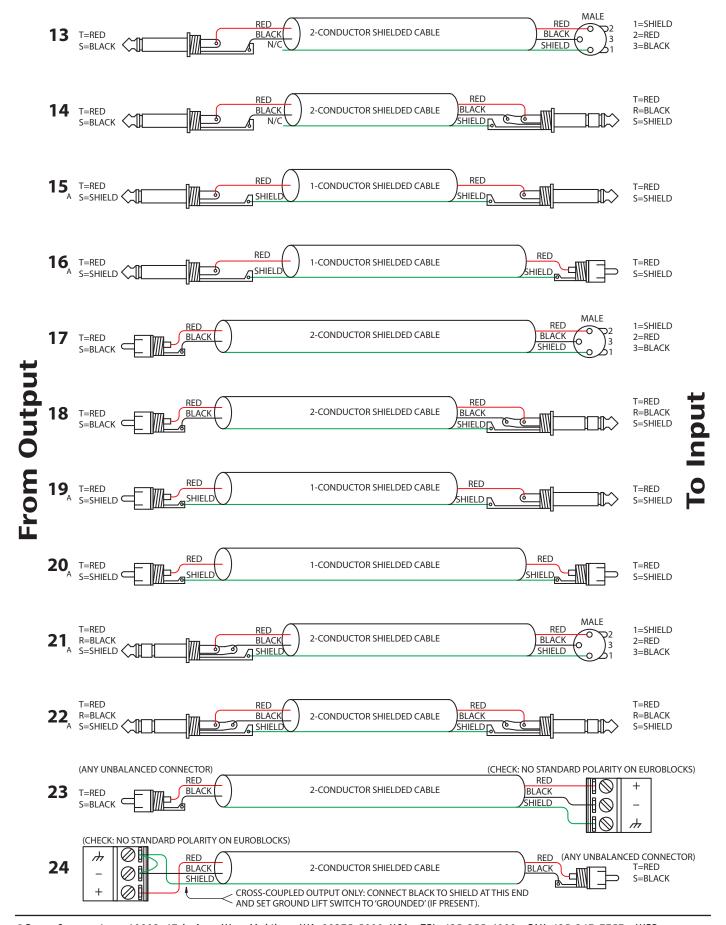
	CABLE CONNECTORS					
		MALE BALANCED XLR	1/4" BALANCED TRS (TIP-RING-SLEEVE)	1/4" OR 3.5mm UNBALANCED TS (TIP-SLEEVE)	UNBALANCED RCA	BALANCED EUROBLOCK
	FEMALE BALANCED XLR (NOT A TRANSFORMER, NOR A CROSS-COUPLED OUTPUT STAGE)	1	2	<b>3</b> <sub>B</sub>	<b>4</b> <sub>B</sub>	+ to + - to - SHIELD NC
	FEMALE BALANCED XLR (EITHER A TRANSFORMER OR A CROSS-COUPLED OUTPUT STAGE)	1	2	5	6	+ to + - to - SHIELD NC
	1/4" BALANCED TRS (NOT A TRANSFORMER, NOR A CROSS-COUPLED OUTPUT STAGE)	7	8	<b>9</b> <sub>B</sub>	<b>10</b> <sub>B</sub>	+ to + - to - SHIELD ONLY TO EUROBLOCK
Tom Output	1/4" BALANCED TRS (EITHER A TRANSFORMER OR A CROSS-COUPLED OUTPUT STAGE)	7	8	11	12	+ to + - to - SHIELD NC
	1/4" FLOATING UNBALANCED TRS (TIP-RING-SLEEVE) (SLEEVE IN UNIT = NC)	21,	<b>22</b> <sub>A</sub>	11	12	+ to + - to - GROUND to GROUND
-	1/4" OR 3.5 mm UNBALANCED TS (TIP-SLEEVE)	13	14	<b>15</b> <sub>^</sub>	<b>16</b> <sub>A</sub>	23
	UNBALANCED RCA (TIP-SLEEVE)	17	18	19,	<b>20</b> <sub>A</sub>	23
	BALANCED EUROBLOCK	+ to + - to - SHIELD ONLY TO XLR PIN 1	+ to + - to - SHIELD ONLY TO TRS SLEEVE	24	24	+ to + - to - GROUND to GROUND

Figure 4. Interconnect chart for locating correct cable assemblies on the following pages.

Note: (A) This configuration uses an "off-the-shelf" cable.

Note: (B) This configuration causes a 6 dB signal loss. Compensate by "turning the system up" 6 dB. Interconnection-6





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Interconnection-8 DOC 102907



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Your unit may be serviced by the Rane Factory or any Authorized Rane Service Center. To find a Service Center near you, please call the Rane factory, or check the Rane website. Please do not return your unit to Rane without prior authorization.

Rane Corporation

To obtain service or a Return Authorization, please phone 425-355-6000 or Fax 425-347-7757

The current list of U.S. Rane Authorized Service Centers is found on our website: WWW.rane.com/service.html

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NOTICE! You must complete and return the warranty card or register your product online to extend the Warranty from 2 years to 3 years!

TO VALIDATE YOUR EXTENDED WARRANTY: Use the postcard that came in the box with your unit, or go to www.rane.com and click on **New Product Registration**. Fill out the warranty completely, being sure to **include the model and serial number** of the unit since this is how warranties are tracked. If your Rane product was purchased in the USA, mail the completed card or register online with to Rane Corporation within 10 days from the date of purchase. **If you purchased the product outside the USA you must file your warranty registration with the Rane Distributor in that country.** It is advised that you keep your bill of sale as proof of purchase, should any difficulties arise concerning the registration of the warranty card. **NOTICE:** IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO REGISTER IN ORDER TO RECEIVE RANE CORPORATION'S STANDARD TWO YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY.

WARRANTY REGISTRATION is made and tracked by **model and serial numbers only**, not by the purchaser's or owner's name. Therefore any warranty correspondence or inquires **must** include the model and serial number of the product in question. Be sure to fill in the model and serial number in the space provided below and keep this in a safe place for future reference.

WARRANTY SERVICE MUST BE PERFORMED ONLY BY AN AUTHORIZED RANE SERVICE FACILITY LOCATED IN THE COUNTRY WHERE THE UNIT WAS PURCHASED, OR (if product was purchased in the USA) AT THE RANE FACTORY IN THE USA. If the product is being sent to Rane for repair, please call the factory for a Return Authorization number. We recommend advance notice be given to the repair facility to avoid possible needless shipment in case the problem can be solved over the phone. UNAUTHORIZED SERVICE PERFORMED ON ANY RANE PRODUCT WILL VOID ITS EXISTING FACTORY WARRANTY.

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If you wish your Rane product to be serviced at the factory, **it must be shipped fully insured, in the original packing box or equivalent.** This warranty will **not** cover repairs on products damaged through improper packaging. If possible, avoid sending products through the mail. Be sure to include in the package:

- 1. Complete return street shipping address (P.O. Box numbers are **not** acceptable).
- 2. A detailed description of any problems experienced, including the make and model numbers of any other system equipment.
- 3. Remote power supply, if applicable.

Repaired products purchased in the U.S. will be returned prepaid freight via the same method they were sent to Rane. Products purchased in the USA, but sent to the factory from outside the USA **must** include return freight funds, and the sender is fully responsible for all customs procedures, duties, tariffs and deposits.

In order to qualify for Rane's one year extended warranty (for a total of 3 years parts and labor), the warranty must be completely filled out and sent to us immediately. Valid in USA only.

We recommend you write your serial number here in your owners manual and on your sales receipt for your records.

SERIAL NUMBER:	PURCHASE DATE:	

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Warranty-2 108360

### **Declaration of Conformity**

# Application of Council Directive(s):

# Standard(s) to which conformity is declared:

2001/95/EC 2012/19/EU 2004/108/EC 2006/95/EC 2011/65/EU 

### Manufacturer:

Rane Corporation 10802 47th Avenue West Mukilteo WA 98275-5000 USA

This equipment has been tested and found to be in compliance with all applicable standards and regulations applying to the EU's Low Voltage (LV) directive 2006/95/EC, and Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) directive 2004/108/EC. In order for the customer to maintain compliance with this regulation, high quality shielded cable must be used for interconnection to other equipment. Modification of the equipment, other than that expressly outlined by the manufacturer, is not allowed under this directive. The user of this equipment shall accept full responsibility for compliance with the LV directive and EMC directive in the event that the equipment is modified without written consent of the manufacturer. This declaration of conformity is issued under the sole responsibility of Rane Corporation.

### Type of Equipment: Professional Audio Signal Processing

**Brand:** Rane

Model: MLM82S

Immunity Results:	THD+N re: 4 dBu, 400 Hz, BW=20-20kHz		
Test Description	Results	Conditions	
RF Electromagnetic Fields Immunity			
80 MHz -1000 MHz, 1 kHz AM, 80% depth, 3V/m	< -68 dB	80 MHz - 200 MHz	
	< -30 dB	200 MHz - 1000 MHz	
Conducted RF Disturbances Immunity			
150 kHz - 80 MHz, 1 kHz AM, 80% depth, 3V rms	< -80 dB	Power Lines	
	< -79 dB	Signal Lines	
Magnetic Fields Immunity			
50 Hz - 10 kHz, 4.0 - 0.4 A/m	< -53 dB		
150 kHz - 80 MHz, 1 kHz AM, 80% depth, 3V rms  Magnetic Fields Immunity	<-79 dB		

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the equipment specified above conforms to the Directive(s) and Standard(s) shown above.

Michaël Rollins
(Full Name)

**Compliance Engineer** 

(Position)

May 23, 2007

(Signature)

**Mukilteo WA USA** 

(Date)

(Place)

# MLM82S



MIC & LINE MIXER